Empowering Women for Creative Solutions in Interpersonal Conflict at Work

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Abstract

Purpose

Creativity plays a crucial role in interpersonal conflict within organizations, yet little research has explored its antecedents in this context. This study investigates power and gender as the main determinants of creativity in interpersonal conflict within organizational contexts.

Design/Methodology/Approach:

Two studies were conducted. The first study involved 226 employees from various organizations ($M_{age} = 39.39, SD = 10.39$), while the second study utilized a conflict simulation with 160 participants ($M_{age} = 36.90, SD = 10.45$) forming dyads. Both studies investigated the impact of relative power (i.e., having more power than the other person) on creativity in conflict, with a focus on the moderating role of gender. Study 2 also manipulated contextual creativity, which served as an additional moderator in this relationship.

Findings:

Results largely supported our hypotheses, indicating a positive relationship between relative power and creativity in conflict. Importantly, this relationship was stronger among women. Study 2 further focused on the distinct dimensions of creativity, highlighting differences between idea originality and effectiveness.

Originality:

This research contributes novel insights into the understanding of creativity within organizational conflicts, emphasizing the interplay between relative power, gender, and creativity. Additionally, the exploration of different dimensions of creativity (i.e., originality and effectiveness) adds depth to existing literature in this area.

Practical Implications:
POWER, GENDER, AND CREATIVITY IN CONFLICT

The findings hold practical significance for organizational leaders and conflict resolution practitioners, and they further underscore the importance of considering gender dynamics in conflict resolution processes within organizations.

Keywords: creativity in interpersonal conflict, relative power, gender, idea originality, idea effectiveness
Empowering Women for Creative Solutions in Interpersonal Conflict at Work

Interpersonal conflict is common within organizations: work stressors are prevalent, viewpoints differ, and opposite personalities clash. Importantly, interpersonal conflict encompasses negative elements, including disagreement, interference, and negative emotions (Barki and Hartwick, 2004; Lewicki et al., 2020; Pondy, 1967; Putnam and Poole, 1987; Thomas, 1992; Wall and Callister, 1995), all of which have detrimental effects on individuals and organizations as they can create a toxic environment, dampen enthusiasm for work, and impede organizational functioning (Adebayo, 2006).

Nevertheless, conflict is unavoidable and should be better managed constructively to minimize its negative effects (Adebayo, 2006; Zuelke et al., 2020). Approaching conflict creatively seems to be the best way to handle conflicts as creativity brings fresh perspectives, fosters collaborative problem-solving, promotes empathy, and encourages continuous learning (Wilson and Thompson, 2014). By leveraging creativity, individuals can experience an “Aha!” moment similar to problem-solvers who discover an elegant solution to a creative puzzle (Metcalfe and Wiebe, 1987; Smith and Kounios, 1996) and can transform conflicts into opportunities for growth and positive change (Fousiani et al., 2022; Wilson and Thompson, 2014).

However, people often fail to be creative in conflict situations (Chen, 2006; Lee et al., 2018; Yong et al., 2014) as negative emotions like stress, concern, and anxiety often emerge due to conflict, which impedes the ability to think creatively (Byron et al., 2010; Byron and Khazanchi, 2011). Nevertheless, other studies show that in certain situations, people can think and behave creatively when confronted with conflicts (Fousiani et al., 2022; Santos et al., 2015), proposing the investigation of the role of both contextual factors (Curșeu et al., 2022; also see Lee et al., 2018) and individual characteristics (e.g., De Clercq et al., 2017) in creativity in interpersonal conflicts.
According to the literature on power (Fiske, 1993; Fiske and Berdahl, 2007; Keltner et al., 2003; Magee and Galinsky, 2008; Thibaut and Kelley, 1959), one of the main contextual factors influencing the ability for creative thinking and generation of creative ideas—outside of a conflict situation—is power. Indeed, Galinsky et al. (2008) found that individuals experiencing high power are more likely to generate creative ideas and less likely to be influenced by mundane examples and instructions available in their environment when making decisions (see also Anderson and Thompson, 2004; Fousiani, 2020; Nelson et al., 2015). Moreover, power is associated with the ability to deploy abstract and higher-level thinking, which is also associated with creativity (Smith and Trope, 2006). Yet, to the best of our knowledge, there is no research investigating power's role in creative thinking within a conflict context to date.

Conflict, being a dynamic process that emerges within interdependent relationships and encompassing negative elements and destructive behaviors (Lewicki et al., 2020), presents a unique context to investigate the role of power in creativity. In this study we investigate how relative power (i.e., the comparative influence held by individuals and their perceived sense of control over a situation in relation to the other person; see (Fousiani, 2020; Fousiani et al., 2021, 2022; Van Kleef et al., 2006) influences individuals’ creativity in situations of interpersonal conflict and hypothesize a positive relationship between possession of relative power and creativity.

Despite the crucial role of power in creativity, not all powerful individuals are expected to think creatively when involved in emotionally-laden situations like conflict. Indeed, according to the conflict management literature, power is often associated with self-interested behaviors in conflict and decreased motivation to problem-solve and search for mutual gains (Fousiani, 2020; Fousiani et al., 2021, 2022; Van Kleef et al., 2006), which indicates a decreased motivation to think out-of-the-box and generate creative ideas. Actually,
being able to put negativity that accompanies conflicts aside and generate creative ideas requires certain skills and increased motivation to use power in a more responsible than opportunistic manner (De Wit et al., 2017), which seems to occur more frequently among women as compared to men in power. Indeed, according to the social role theory (Eagly and Wood, 2012), women in positions of power, particularly holding leadership roles, exhibit better crisis response capabilities (Post et al., 2019), superior outcomes (Hong and van der Wijst, 2013) and stronger creative and innovative behaviors compared to their male counterparts (Hong and van der Wijst, 2013). This is attributed to their relational and emotion regulation skills (Eagly and Carli, 2007; Ely, 1995; Post et al., 2019), along with their enhanced propensity to act responsibly (Haslam and Ryan, 2008; Ryan et al., 2011). Drawing from these findings, we argue that gender moderates the relationship between power and creativity within a conflict context such that the positive effect of power will be stronger among women than men.

This study contributes to the existing literature in three significant ways. First and foremost, it fills a crucial gap by delving into the underexplored domain of creativity within workplace conflicts (Adebayo, 2006). While interpersonal conflicts are a common occurrence in organizations (Runde and Flanagan, 2012), the exploration of creative thinking within this context remains notably limited, despite its significance (Wilson and Thomson, 2014). By investigating the paradox of fostering creativity amid emotionally-laden conflict situations, characterized by increased cognitive load and communication barriers, this research sheds light on the potential for creative thinking to serve as a constructive tool in conflict resolution.

Second, our study expands the conflict literature by introducing the role of power on creativity within conflicts (Fousiani, 2020; Fousiani et al., 2021). While previous research has explored the role of power in creative thinking outside of conflict, this study pioneers an
investigation into how power operates specifically within the dynamic process of interpersonal conflicts.

Third, this study advances the social role theory by emphasizing the superior creative skills of women in conflict situations (Eagly and Wood, 2012; Ryan et al., 2011; Bruckmüller et al., 2014). By establishing a connection between gender, power, and creativity, the study highlights the importance of empowering women in high-power positions, offering evidence-based recommendations for promoting creativity and effective conflict resolution in the workplace. Together, these contributions not only enrich academic discourse but also offer practical insights for organizational leaders and policymakers seeking to enhance workplace harmony and foster a culture of creativity amid conflicts.

Creativity in Conflict Situations

Creativity is commonly characterized as the production of ideas and products that are both original and useful (Runco and Jaeger, 2012). As noted earlier, creativity is seen as a crucial factor of successful conflict handling (for a review, see Wilson and Thompson, 2014). Indeed, examining alternatives that potentially lead to good solutions and effective problem-solving is possible through creative idea generation (Bazerman and Moore, 2012; Fousiani et al., 2022; Hyder et al., 2000; Thompson, 2015). For instance, out-of-the-box thinking, which is inherent in creativity, helps come up with novel ideas that can facilitate problem-solving and promote conflict resolution (Guilford, 1959, 1967). Nevertheless, conflict is in itself a very special context hindering out-of-the-box thinking and leading to narrow-mindedness (Chen, 2006; Lee et al., 2018; Yong et al., 2014). Indeed, when in conflict, people experience threat (Lewicki et al., 2020), which is related to inflexible and narrow thinking (Carnevale and Probst, 1998; Staw et al., 1981) and heightened pressure to adhere to norms (Murray and Schaller, 2012). Moreover, individuals in conflict situations often face uncertainty (Lewicki et al., 2020), which has been associated with a reluctance to embrace creative solutions, as novel
and inventive ideas are perceived as risky and may potentially exacerbate feelings of uncertainty (Mueller et al., 2012).

Nevertheless, while conflict brings forth negative elements that impede creativity, there are instances where conflict appears to be associated with heightened levels of creative thinking (Chen, 2006; Kurtzberg and Mueller, 2005). For instance, in times of urgent threats - like in interpersonal conflicts- individuals are strongly motivated to address the immediate threat (Turner and Virick, 2008). While their thinking may be drawn to threat-related cues, even within this restricted focus, they may generate creative ideas that enable them to address the threat at hand. In a similar vein, research shows that under high-threat conditions, individuals may demonstrate openness to creative ideas that can potentially provide good solutions (West, 2002). Importantly, individuals tend to exhibit higher creativity when it serves to mitigate negative consequences of a situation in which they are involved (Roskes et al., 2012).

While creativity plays a pivotal role in effectively addressing conflicts, there is a notable scarcity in the literature regarding the factors influencing creativity in interpersonal conflict, with a particular gap in research investigating the antecedents of creativity in workplace conflicts. Considering that interpersonal conflicts in the workplace are a prevalent phenomenon, consuming up to 40% of leaders’ valuable time (Runde and Flanagan, 2012), it becomes imperative to delve into the factors that foster creative conflict management in the workplace.

**Power and Creativity in Conflict Situations**

The role of relative power in conflict is well-established (Fousiani et al., 2021). Despite some research revealing a positive relationship between relative power and competitive behavior in conflict (De Dreu, 1995; Lawler, 1992), the vast majority of research has demonstrated a positive relationship between power and collaboration in conflict.
situations (Fousiani et al., 2021; Overbeck and Park, 2006). Indeed, research indicates that powerholders are often more likely to view their power as a responsibility to fulfill shared goals and obligations, treating powerless others with consideration rather than selfishness (Fousiani and Wisse, 2022; Sassenberg et al., 2012, 2014; Chen et al., 2001; De Wit et al., 2017). In contrast, individuals with lower relative power tend to be more self-focused, directing their attention towards masking their inferiority and improving their hierarchical standing (Earle et al., 1983).

Besides the effects of power on conflict management, power also seems to play a pivotal role in creativity. Power boosts confidence in one’s own thoughts and perspectives (Anderson and Galinsky, 2006; Briñol et al., 2007) and individuals in powerful positions are better able to rely on their own experiences and emotions when thinking and acting (Briñol et al., 2007; Weick and Guinote, 2008). More specifically, power has an “immunizing effect” on individuals, enabling them to disregard external pressures and social expectations and act based on their inner thoughts, opinions, desires, and needs. As such, individuals with high power are less susceptible to external pressures in their environment than those with low power. For instance, in five experiments, Galinsky et al. (2008) found that individuals primed with high power were more likely to generate creative ideas that were less influenced by salient examples in their environment and further, expressed attitudes that conformed less to the expressed opinions of others. These findings show that power psychologically protects people from external influence, liberates their mindset and fosters increased creativity compared to those with low power (Galinsky et al., 2008). In a similar vein, high power, as opposed to low power, has been found to increase psychological freedom (see construal level theory; Liberman and Trope, 2003), which is also related to higher creativity (Smith and Trope, 2006). Besides the immunizing effect that power has on individuals, research has found that powerful people tend to score higher in positive affect, which predicts creativity,
innovative thinking, and the achievement of win-win outcomes in negotiations (Anderson and Thompson, 2004).

In this study, we conceptualize interpersonal conflict as an “external stimulus” signifying a situation occurring in one’s environment that impacts individuals. Interpersonal conflict involves friction, irritation, clashes, and disputes over personal preferences and values among the involved members (Jehn and Bendersky, 2003). Moreover, conflict has adverse psychological responses such as tension, anxiety, anger, and frustration (Lewicki et al., 2020), which may limit individuals’ creativity. Considering the immunizing effect of power on individuals (Galinsky et al., 2008), it can be argued that individuals in conflicts who hold high power are better equipped to distance themselves from the negative aspects of conflict - and thus are less influenced by the negative elements of the conflict itself- which allows them to employ higher levels of creativity in conflict resolution compared to their low-power counterparts. This suggests that individuals with higher power may possess a greater capacity to emotionally or psychologically detach themselves from the adverse effects of conflict and thus act in a more creative manner.

The underlying assumption is that the reduced emotional involvement of high-power individuals in conflicts results in fewer negative experiences, which in turn fosters increased creativity. With fewer emotional burdens weighing them down, individuals with higher power have more resources available for creative thinking. Consequently, they are better positioned to generate innovative solutions to conflicts, drawing upon their enhanced ability to focus on problem-solving rather than being consumed by emotional distress. Based on the above, we proposed the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1**

Relative power will be positively related to creativity in interpersonal conflict in the workplace.
The Moderating Role of Gender

Despite the positive role of power in creativity (Galinsky et al., 2008), power has been found to have a “dark” face in interpersonal relations that might hinder motivation to think creatively in situations of interpersonal conflict. More specifically, research suggests that powerful individuals are less inclined to pay attention to and consider the perspectives of those with less power than vice versa. This is attributed to the abundance of resources and greater independence enjoyed by high-power individuals, whereas low-power individuals, being more dependent on others for outcomes, are motivated to closely attend to those they depend on to regain some sense of control (Fiske, 1993; Fiske and Dépret, 1996; Keltner et al., 2003). Consequently, instead of engaging in problem-solving, which is closely associated with creative thinking (Wilson and Thompson, 2014), high-power individuals often resort to assertive approaches in conflict situations (Fousiani, 2020; Fousiani et al., 2021; Van Kleef et al., 2006). Based on the above, it is reasonable to assume that the role of relative power in creativity in interpersonal conflicts might be contingent on specific characteristics of the powerful members involved in conflict. We argue that, to use power to promote creativity in a threatening situation like conflict, one should be motivated to construe their power in a more responsible and conscientious manner.

Such a characteristic that may influence the effect of power on creativity in conditions of interpersonal conflict is gender. According to the social role theory (Eagly and Wood, 2012) women’s behavior in social interactions -such as conflict- is influenced by societal expectations and traditional gender roles. According to this theory, women often adopt communal orientations, emphasizing relationships, collaboration, and nurturing behaviors. The expectation of women to fulfill nurturing roles and to be more prosocial contributes to their tendency to provide support and maintain social harmony in social interactions (Post et al., 2019). This theory also suggests that women may exhibit communication styles focused
on building rapport and connection, using affiliative language and avoiding direct confrontation. Therefore, although men are in general more creative and produce more original ideas as compared to women, which can be ascribed to their enhanced self-satisfaction, socialization, insensitivity to criticism, and unusual cognitive style (Abraham, 2016; Baer, 1997; Bender et al., 2013; He and Wong, 2011; Proudfoot et al., 2015; Stoltzfus et al., 2011), it is noteworthy that women, particularly when in positions of power or leadership, can surpass men in creative endeavors during times of crisis. This shift may be attributed to their heightened relational skills (Post et al., 2019), and strategic capabilities (Torchia et al., 2011). Moreover, high-power women manifest increased responsibility as compared to high-power men by taking the blame for failures and undesirable outcomes in organizations (Ryan, et al., 2011). Similarly, men differ from women in how they view and utilize power whenever they have it, with women being more responsible and conscientious than men (Buschlen and Johnson, 2014; Dugan, 2006a, 2006b; Dugan and Komives, 2007).

Finally, unlike men, women in powerful positions are more inclined to adopt cooperative leadership styles that prioritize team goals, demonstrating high levels of emotional expression (Litz and Folker, 2002) and an increased capability to create room for novel strategies (Galia et al., 2015).

Based on the aforementioned literature and building on the social role theory (Eagly and Wood, 2012), we argue that the effect of relative power on creativity in interpersonal conflict will be influenced by the powerful individual’s gender. Indeed, women possess the required skills and demonstrate an increased motivation to use their power more responsibly than men, making them more likely to think creatively in situations of interpersonal conflict, with the aim of identifying integrative outcomes that benefit everyone involved. More specifically, we stated the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 2**
The positive effect of relative power on creativity in interpersonal conflict will be stronger among women than men, such that high-power women will exhibit more creativity in interpersonal conflict than high-power men.

The Moderating Role of Contextual Creativity

Considering that real-life conflicts do not play out in a social vacuum, but people are unavoidably provided with either many or limited opportunities to think creatively about their conflicts, this study further investigated the moderating role of contextual creativity (high versus low; see Fousiani et al., 2022) in the relationship between power, gender, and creativity in interpersonal conflict. Indeed, in order for creativity to emerge, the broader context should foster creativity (e.g., provide sufficient time for the generation of multiple alternatives, encourage flexible thought, suspend judgment, look at problems in a different or even divergent manner; Guilford, 1959; De Jonge et al., 2023) or any attempts for creative thinking may fail (Woodman et al., 1993). Indeed, previous studies have found that individuals’ potential for creativity can be hindered if the broader environment does not explicitly support creative thinking (Shalley and Gilson, 2004). For instance, although competitive work environments promote creativity (Nnadozie et al., 2019), traditional work environments hinder creativity and foster conservative and previously tested ways of approaching challenging situations (Dokko et al., 2014). Importantly, besides the demonstrated direct effects of contextual creativity in effective conflict resolution (Wilson and Thomson, 2014), contextual creativity has been found to interact with power and individual characteristics (i.e., chronological age) in the prediction of people’s reaction to conflict (Fousiani et al., 2022).

Accordingly, and based on the above, we hypothesized that the main effect of power (Hypothesis 1) and the moderation effect of gender (Hypothesis 2) would be observed specifically in the creativity condition, where individuals are encouraged by their environment
to engage in creative thinking, rather than when their opportunities for creative thinking are
limited. Based on these considerations, we proposed the following hypotheses:

_Hypothesis 3a_

The positive effect of relative power on creativity in interpersonal conflict will be
stronger when the broader context encourages (rather than discourages) creativity.

_Hypothesis 3b_

The positive effect of relative power of women (as opposed to men) on creativity in
interpersonal conflict will be stronger when the broader context encourages (rather than
discourages) creativity.

**Overview of the Studies**

To test our hypotheses 1 and 2, we ran two studies: Study 1 was a field study with
employee participants working in various companies where conflicts are prevalent. This
study, besides demographic characteristics (including gender) measured participants’ relative
power in a conflict with a co-worker that participants were requested to recall as well as their
overall creativity while dealing with that conflict. Study 2 aimed to replicate Study 1 in an
experimental setting, allowing for the examination of causality and further testing Hypotheses
3a and 3b. Study 2 was an online experiment where participants were paired with another
participant forming dyads and engaged in a real-time conflict simulation similar to Steinel et
al. (2007) and Fousiani et al. (2021, 2022). We utilized the Best Alternative to a Negotiated
Agreement (BATNA) approach (Fisher and Ury, 1981 see also Van Kleef et al., 2006;
Fousiani et al., 2022) to manipulate participants’ relative power. BATNA refers to the most
favorable outcome an individual can achieve if they fail to reach an agreement through
negotiation with the other party. The participant with the strongest BATNA is deemed to
possess higher relative power, as they are less dependent on the other party and can pursue
their interests to attain a more advantageous outcome (Fisher and Ury, 1981). Accordingly,
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one of the conflicting parties within the dyad had a stronger BATNA than the other. Subsequently, we requested participants to generate creative ideas for resolving the conflict at hand. Then, experts coded participants’ generated ideas for creativity. This approach offers advantages over self-reported measures used in Study 1 (Paulhus and Vazire, 2007), as it provides increased objectivity and more reliable and detailed data (Meinecke et al., 2016).

Moreover, to test Hypotheses 3a and 3b, in Study 2 we also manipulated contextual creativity (high versus low) similar to Fousiani et al. (2022). Accordingly, participants in Study 2 were requested to generate ideas about the conflict at hand in a context that would either favor or discourage creative thinking based on the Osborn’s (1957) guidelines (see Method section of Study 2 for details).

Method

Study 1

Study Design and Participants

The sample of this field study comprised 226 employees residing in the UK, who were recruited via Prolific (59.3% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 39.39, SD = 10.39$). Around one-third of the participants (30.1%) held a high-school diploma, while slightly less than half (42%) had obtained a bachelor’s degree. Additionally, nearly one-fifth of the participants (19.5%) had achieved a graduate degree. Eligible participants indicated that they were previously involved in workplace conflict. The duration of our study was approximately 10 minutes and respondents were compensated with £0.70 for their participation. Employing G*Power’s sensitivity power analysis, an effect size of $\rho = .11$ for 80% power was revealed.

Procedure

We used the critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954), according to which, participants were requested to recall a conflict that had occurred between a colleague and themselves within the last six months. Participants were asked to provide a brief description
of the recalled conflict. Consequently, they were asked about the nature of the conflict,
followed by a few questions about their reaction to the conflict. The complete instructions can
be found in the online supplementary material. Ethics approval was obtained prior to the data
collection. All participants gave their informed consent before completing the questionnaire.
Upon completion, they were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Measures

Relative Power. Participants rated their relative power over that of their counterpart in
the conflict at hand utilizing the nine-item scale by Van Kleef et al. (2006). A sample item
included “Who do you think was most dependent on the other?”, with items measured on a
Likert scale ranging from 1 = definitely the other person to 7 = definitely myself. Cronbach’s
alpha was high at $\alpha = 0.91$.

Creativity. To assess participants’ creativity while handling the conflict at hand, we
employed the adapted 10-item version of the Organizational Encouragement subscale of the
KEYS scale (Amabile, 1995; Amabile et al., 1996) as used in Fousiani et al. (2022). A
sample item is “While discussing possible solutions to this disagreement/conflict […] I solved
the problem at hand by thinking creatively”, measured on a Likert scale between 1 = not at all
and 7 = to a great extent with a Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.96$.

The complete scales can be found in the online supplementary material.

Results

Gender was coded as: 1= woman, 2= man. Relative power was positively related to
creativity ($r = .41, p < .001$) and gender ($r = .14, p < .05$). Moreover, creativity was positively
related to gender ($r = .18, p < .01$). We first conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis with
MPlus 8 (Muthén and Muthén, 2017) to ensure that our variables were distinct from one

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1Items from KEYS are reprinted, for research purposes only, with the permission of Teresa M. Amabile, PhD.
We used an adapted version of the questionnaire after acquiring written permission. The adapted questionnaire
has been previously used in Fousiani et al. (2022).
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another. In the analysis, we included relative power and creativity. The model fit was acceptable ($\chi^2= 453.788$, $df= 148$, $p< .001$; RMSEA = .096 [CI .09; .11]); CFI= .93; SRMR= .045). Moreover, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis with Varimax rotation, which produced two factors: The first factor explained 39.77% of variance and was labeled “relative power”, because all relative power items loaded on that factor. The second factor explained 28.37% of variance and was labeled “creativity” as all creativity items loaded on that factor. There were no cross-loadings. The factor loadings are presented in Appendix I.

Hypothesis Testing

Effects of Power and Gender on Creativity

The overall model was significant $R^2=.20$, $F(3, 222) =18.38$, $p< .001$. As expected, in line with Hypothesis 1, the main effect of power on creativity was significant and positive ($b= 0.45$, $SE= .08$, $p< .001$; 95% CI [0.30; 0.60]). Moreover, the main effect of gender on creativity was significant and positive, showing that men were more creative than women ($b= 0.41$, $SE= .20$, $p= .03$; 95% CI [0.03; 0.80]). Most importantly, the power by gender interaction came out significant $\Delta R^2= 0.02$, $F(1, 222) = 4.62$, $p= .03$ and in line with Hypothesis 2, it showed that the positive effect of power on creativity is stronger among women ($b= 0.59$, $SE= .09$, $p< .001$; 95% CI [0.41; 0.76]) than men ($b= 0.25$, $SE= .13$, $p< .05$; 95% CI [0.004; 0.50]) (see Figure 1).

Discussion

Study 1 was a field study with employee participants working in various organizations. Importantly, Study 1 comprised participants who had experienced interpersonal conflict in their workplace, and their task involved reporting on the degree to which they exhibited creativity while managing a specific conflict that they were instructed to recall.

2 Although the RMSEA is below the recommended threshold, the other indices demonstrate a good fit to the data. Accordingly, we consider the overall fit to be acceptable.
Results of study 1 provided support for Hypothesis 1, showing that participants experiencing higher relative power (over the other conflicting party), indicated having exhibited higher creativity while dealing with the conflict at hand. Moreover, gender also had a significant main effect on creativity, showing that men are more creative in conflict than women. These findings are in line with previous research --outside a conflict context-- showing that men are indeed overall more creative than women (Baer, 1997; Bender et al., 2013; He et al., 2011; Stoltzfus et al., 2011). Finally, in line with Hypothesis 2, gender moderated the relationship between power and creativity in conflict, revealing that the positive effect of power on creativity is more pronounced among women compared to men. This finding supports our theoretical framework, suggesting that power produces more favorable outcomes, such as increased creativity in conflict situations, particularly when assigned to women. This could be possibly attributed to powerful women’s ability to wield their power responsibly and leverage their enhanced emotional skills to facilitate creative problem-solving.

Despite the interesting results of Study 1, this study was a correlational study and could not test causality. To address this limitation, Study 2 employed an experimental approach, manipulating power within a real-time conflict simulation. Additionally, according to the creativity literature, creativity involves two main components: originality and effectiveness (e.g. Corazza, 2016; Corazza and Lubart, 2020; Runco and Jaeger, 2012), which were not taken into consideration in Study 1, rendering its assessment of overall creativity limited. To address this, in Study 2, two experts coded participants’ actual creativity in dealing with conflict, considering both originality and effectiveness. Finally, Study 1 did not test Hypotheses 3a and 3b. Recognizing that creativity thrives within a context that explicitly supports it (Shalley and Gilson, 2004), Study 2 also implemented a manipulation of creativity similar to Fousiani et al. (2022).

Study 2
Study 2 aimed to replicate Study 1 in an experimental setting. Importantly, Study 2 adopted a dual approach to creativity, considering both idea originality and idea effectiveness. Indeed, creativity can be defined as the ability to generate original and effective ideas, solutions, or expressions that go beyond conventional thinking. It involves combining existing knowledge, skills, or resources in novel ways to produce something new that is original and valuable/effective (Amabile, 1996; Litchfield et al., 2015). Accordingly, creativity involves two main components: originality and effectiveness (e.g. Corazza, 2016; Corazza and Lubart, 2020; Runco and Jaeger, 2012). Originality refers to the uniqueness and novelty of the ideas or solutions generated beyond current standards and practices (Guilford, 1950). If the idea is not novel, unique, or original, it is viewed as an ordinary and conventional idea that does not add something new to what already exists (De Jonge et al., 2018). Effectiveness refers to the idea's practicality, usefulness, and feasibility (Runco and Jaeger, 2012). This dimension evaluates the extent to which an idea can be implemented and whether doing so will likely result in the desired outcome aimed for. In other words, effectiveness focuses on the feasibility of an idea for its effective implementation and on the impact of the idea on the desired outcomes at the same time (De Jonge, 2019). Too much focus on idea originality alone is not sufficient to ensure the successful implementation of an idea. Similarly, too much focus on idea effectiveness alone may lead to ideas that can be successfully implemented, but which are not necessarily novel or original. The key to creativity is to combine originality and effectiveness, by generating ideas that are both original (unique) and effective (practical) (Corazza and Lubart, 2020). Based on the above, Study 2 operationalizes creativity in conflict as the combination of two different facets/indicators, idea originality and idea effectiveness. Accordingly, opposite to Study 1, where a traditional unidimensional creativity scale was used to measure idea creativity, in this study we coded creativity in interpersonal conflict based on these two distinct dimensions.
Participants

We aimed for approximately 150-170 participants to get 80% power for this research design. Eventually, we recruited 160 employees residing in the UK via Prolific. Of the participants, 154 were successfully coupled to a counterpart (50.6% female; $M_{age} = 36.90, SD = 10.45$), comprising 77 dyads in total. 13% of the participants had acquired a high-school diploma. The majority of our sample (62.3%) had acquired a university/college degree. Additionally, 18.2% had obtained a master’s degree, and a smaller proportion (5.2%) had attained a PhD. After completing an approximately 30-minute conflict resolution task, they were compensated with £2.50. Computing a sensitivity analysis in G*Power revealed that with 80% power to detect an interaction, our effect size was $f = 0.15$.

Experimental Design and Procedure

Within their dyads, participants were randomly assigned to a condition based on a 2 (power: strong BATNA versus weak BATNA) x 2 (creativity: high versus low) design aiming to investigate the effects of power, gender, and contextual creativity on idea creativity. We manipulated power within dyads with one participant occupying the high-power position and their counterpart the low-power position. Creativity was manipulated between dyads, meaning that both participants operated within the same creativity condition (high or low).

Participants’ gender was measured. Within their dyads, participants were prompted to imagine being colleagues attempting to resolve two contentious issues related to the exact period of their summer holiday and the exact duration of the holiday (see online supplementary material for the complete description of the topics of conflict). To discuss and settle said topics, participants used a real-time online interaction tool (SMARTRIQS, Molnar, 2019), which is a function within the Qualtrics research suite. Subsequent to a series of conversation instances, participants were presented with a payoff schedule comparable to that used in Fousiani et al. (2021) and Fousiani et al., (2022) and were asked to reach an agreement based on it. The
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payoff schedule outlined the alternatives that participants would have to choose from and the corresponding points allocated to each alternative, with variations as in Fousiani et al. (2022).

Following the conversation and the exchange of ideas with the aim of reaching mutually beneficial outcomes, participants were asked to fill in the measures, were debriefed, and thanked for their participation in the study.

Manipulations

**Manipulating Power.** Power was manipulated using the BATNA paradigm, similar to Van Kleef et al., (2006) and Fousiani et al. (2022). Adhering to the imaginary workplace scenario, participants in the high-power condition (i.e., strong BATNA) were informed that their request would be prioritized by their boss over the request of their low-power counterparts (i.e., weak BATNA) in case they failed to reach an agreement. This created more dependency of the low-power participant (participant with a weak BATNA) on the counterpart (participant with a strong BATNA) and thus created a power asymmetry between the two dyad members. Accordingly, high-power individuals would earn more points than their counterparts in the event of disagreement. However, it is noteworthy that both dyad members would fare even better if they were able to reach a mutual agreement (make a deal by selecting the same option in the payoff schedule).

**Manipulating Creative Context.** We manipulated creativity similarly to Fousiani et al., (2022) and in line with Osborn’s four creativity rules (1957). More specifically, in the high-creativity condition, both members of a dyad were requested to provide a wealth of possible solutions to the two topics of conflict, compounding on each other, remaining open to unusual/strange ideas, and avoiding criticizing the ideas of their counterpart. Conversely, low-creativity participants were tasked with providing one single solution to the topics of conflict, and then prompted to complete a filler task, by listing the names of American food-chains located in Europe. Participants in either condition were given 10 minutes to produce
their ideas and share them with their counterpart. In the high-creativity condition, upon receiving an idea, the task was to build and extend it. In contrast, in the low-creativity condition, participants were asked to simply send an offer to their counterpart.

**Measures**

**Manipulation Checks.** In relation to power, four items were utilized as manipulation checks, adapted from a similar scale used in Van Kleef et al., (2006). A sample item is the following: “My colleague was in a disadvantaged position compared to me”, with potential answers ranging between 1 = *totally disagree* and 7 = *totally agree*, and Cronbach’s $\alpha = .90$. With regard to creativity, four items functioned as manipulation checks, one of which was “I was encouraged to think “out of the box” while generating ideas for possible solutions”, with answers ranging from 1 = *not at all true* to 7 = *completely true*. Cronbach’s alpha was high, $\alpha = .90$. For the full list of the manipulation checks, refer to the online supplementary material.

**Creativity (Idea Originality and Idea Effectiveness).** The creativity of the ideas generated by the participants was assessed on two dimensions, namely idea *originality* and idea *effectiveness*. Adhering to the guideline recommendations, two independent raters followed a standardized rating procedure (Hallgren, 2012). Initially, they read through the entirety of the participants’ output and subsequently rated each idea generated on how novel and unique it was (originality; 1 = *not at all original*, 5 = *very original*) and on how well it would solve the problem at hand (effectiveness; 1= *not at all effective*, 5 = *very effective*), while being blind to the condition and participant the ideas belonged to (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very*). For complete rating instructions, see online supplementary material. Cohen’s Kappa was chosen as a representative measure of inter-rater reliability with originality yielding a score of .842 ($LB = .666$, $UB = .925$) and effectiveness .869 ($LB = .727$, $UB = .937$).

**Demographics.** Participants were requested to indicate their age (in years) and gender (1 = *female*, 2 = *male*). Additionally, they were asked to indicate their nationality (1=...
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American, 2= English, 3= Canadian, 4= Spanish, 5= Italian, 6= Irish, 7= Mexican, 8= German, 9= African American, 10= other (please indicate)), along with their academic (1= no formal education, 2= high school diploma, 3= university/college, 4= master’s degree, 5= PhD, 6= Other) and occupational status (1= student, 2= employee, 3= self-employed/freelancer, 4= unemployed/searching, 5= retired, 6= other).

Control Variables. The dichotomous item “achieving a deal with their counterpart”, with possible answers 1= no, we did not make a deal and 2= yes, we did make a deal, served as a control variable, along with participants’ age and occupational status.

Results

Manipulation Checks

The main effect of the power manipulation on perceived power of participants was significant $F(1, 150)= 92.51, p< .001, \eta^2 = .38$. Participants in the high-power condition indicated having experienced higher power ($M = 4.29, SD = .63$) as opposed to participants in the low-power condition ($M = 3.32, SD = .62$). The main effect of creativity manipulation on the perceived creativity of participants was significant $F(1, 150)= 71.78, p< .001, \eta^2 = .32$. Participants in the high creativity condition indicated having experienced higher creativity ($M = 4.84, SD = .83$) as opposed to participants in the low creativity condition ($M = 3.58, SD = 1.01$). The effect of creativity on perceived power was non-significant. Also, the interaction between power and creativity was non-significant ($F$s $< 1$). Neither the main effect of power nor the interaction effect between power and creativity on perceived creativity were significant. Our manipulations worked as intended.

Hypothesis Testing

Both power and creativity were coded as 1= low and 2= high. Gender was coded as: 1= woman, 2= man. Since age has been found to influence both creativity (Binnewies et al., 2008) and response to conflict (Fousiani et al., 2022), we controlled for participants’
chronological age. Similarly, occupational status has been found to influence response to conflict (Patel et al., 2002) so we also controlled for participants’ occupational status. Finally, achieving a deal in this conflict also served as a control variable. Correlation analyses showed a significant and negative correlation between idea originality and achieving a deal ($r = .16, p < .05$). Moreover, contextual creativity correlated positively with idea originality ($r = .28, p = .007$) and negatively with idea effectiveness ($r = -.20, p = .01$). No other significant correlations between the study variables occurred.

Idea Originality: Effects of Power, Creativity, and Gender on Generation of Original Ideas

We ran a moderation analysis using Process (Hayes, 2018; model 3). The overall model was significant $R^2 = .26, F(10, 139)= 4.83, p< .001$. Opposite to Hypothesis 1, none of the main effects were significant. Moreover, opposite to Hypothesis 2, the power by gender interaction --although not far from reaching significance-- did not prove to be significant. However, in line with Hypothesis 3a, the power by creativity interaction came out significant and showed that the effect of power on idea originality is positive in the high creativity condition $b = 2.46, SE = .73, p = .001; 95\% CI [-1.01; 3.91]), Δ$ $R^2 = 0.03, F(1,139)= 6.05, p = .01$. Moreover, the gender by creativity interaction was significant showing that men, as opposed to women, generated more original ideas when in the high creativity condition ($b = 2.41, SE = .75, p = .01; 95\% CI [0.91; 3.89]) Δ$ $R^2 = 0.04, F(1,139)= 6.64, p = .01$. Importantly, and in line with Hypothesis 3b, the power by creativity by gender interaction also came out significant $ΔR^2 = 0.04, F(1,139)= 7.36, p = .008$ showing that the effect of power on idea originality was positive in the high creativity condition when participants were women ($b = 0.78, SE = .33, p = .02; 95\% CI [0.14; 1.43]) and negative when participants were men ($b = -0.89, SE = .34, p = .01; 95\% CI [-1.57; -0.21]$) (see Figure 2) (see Table 1 for the statistics on the main effects and interactions).
Idea Effectiveness: Effects of Power, Creativity, and Gender on Generation of Effective Ideas

The overall model was significant $R^2 = .20$, $F(10, 139) = 3.53$, $p < .001$. Opposite to Hypothesis 1, none of the main effects on idea effectiveness were significant. However, in line with Hypothesis 2, the power by gender interaction was found to be significant $\Delta R^2 = 0.03$, $F(1,139) = 4.39$, $p = .04$ and showed that power has a negative effect on idea effectiveness among men participants $b = -1.51$, $SE = .55$, $p = .01$; 95% CI [-2.59; 0.43]). The power by creativity interaction also came out significant $\Delta R^2 = 0.02$, $F(1,139) = 4.02$, $p < .05$ and showed that the effect of power on idea effectiveness is negative in the high creativity condition $b = -1.30$, $SE = .53$, $p = .01$; 95% CI [-2.34; -0.26]). This finding does not provide support for Hypothesis 3a. Finally, opposite to Hypothesis 3b, the power by creativity by gender interaction also came out significant $\Delta R^2 = 0.04$, $F(1,139) = 6.49$, $p = .01$ and showed that the effect of power on idea effectiveness is negative among women participants in the high creativity condition ($b = -0.46$, $SE = .23$, $p < .05$; 95% CI [-0.92; -0.001]) and among men in the low creativity condition ($b = -0.57$, $SE = .25$, $p = .02$; 95% CI [-1.05; -0.08]) (see Figure 3) (see Table 2 for the statistics on the main effects and interactions). The unexpected results regarding idea effectiveness are discussed in the Discussion section of Study 2.

Discussion

Study 2 aimed to replicate the results of Study 1 utilizing an experimental design and, thus, testing causality. Moreover, Study 2, instead of merely assessing participants' overall creativity in conflict, it grasped both dimensions of creativity, namely originality and effectiveness, as coded by two experts. Finally, considering that creative behavior can thrive only when the broader context explicitly supports it (Shalley and Gilson, 2004), Study 2 further manipulated contextual creativity (high vs. low).
When predicting idea originality, power did not have a main effect on this creativity dimension. This finding does not provide support for Hypothesis 1. Moreover, opposite to Hypothesis 2, gender did not moderate the effect of power on idea originality. However, in line with Hypothesis 3a, contextual creativity moderated the effect of power on idea originality showing that power had a positive effect on idea originality when the context explicitly supported creativity. Moreover, in line with Hypothesis 3b, power interacted with gender and contextual creativity in the prediction of idea originality showing that power had a positive effect on idea originality among women and when the context supported creativity. Overall, and according to most of our hypotheses, these findings are in line with the findings obtained in Study 1 and show that power is more beneficial (i.e., helps produce more original ideas) when assigned to women than men and when the broader context explicitly fosters creativity.

When predicting idea effectiveness, our findings revealed an interaction between power and gender, indicating that men in powerful positions are less likely to generate effective ideas compared to women. This partially aligns with Hypothesis 2. For the rest, our results presented a different pattern when predicting idea effectiveness. Specifically, we observed a negative effect of power on idea effectiveness among women in the high creativity condition and among men in the low creativity condition. These findings are not in line with Hypothesis 3b and suggest that idea effectiveness, which involves practical and less unconventional concepts (Runco and Jaeger, 2012), may necessitate distinct conditions for women and men. Women in positions of power might not perceive the added value of contextual creativity in generating effective/practical ideas, while men may require explicit support for creativity to generate such ideas. Finally, it is noteworthy that contextual creativity correlated positively with idea originality but negatively with idea effectiveness, which may explain the different findings we obtained when predicting each of the two dimensions:
Apparently, idea originality, which involves idea uniqueness and novelty, may be a better illustration of creativity than idea effectiveness, which involves the generation of more mundane, ordinary, and easily implemented ideas. Further research should explore the role of contextual creativity in understanding these dynamics and the distinct role of idea originality and idea effectiveness.

**General Discussion**

Interpersonal conflict within organizations is a significant issue that consumes a substantial amount of employees’ time and has financial implications for organizations. In the United States, employees spend an estimated 2.8 hours per week engaged in conflict, amounting to approximately $350 billion annually in paid hours focused on arguing rather than positive productivity (CPP Inc., 2008). Similarly, in Europe, 38% of employees experience interpersonal conflict in a given year (CIPD, 2015). Interpersonal conflict requires creative approaches to be effectively managed as creativity brings fresh perspectives, fosters collaborative problem-solving, and promotes mutual understanding (Fousiani et al., 2022; Helzer and Kim, 2019; Wilson and Thompson, 2014). However, there has been a lack of research exploring the factors that influence creativity in interpersonal conflict situations despite its importance for organizations.

Power dynamics play a significant role in shaping individuals’ creative thinking and problem-solving abilities in conflict situations (Fousiani, 2020; Fousiani et al., 2021). Accordingly, understanding how power influences creativity in interpersonal conflict is essential for comprehending the complexities of interpersonal conflicts and their potential for innovative resolutions. Moreover, gender significantly shapes how individuals wield their power in crisis situations (Bruckmüller et al., 2014; Post et al., 2019), highlighting the importance of understanding how gender influences power dynamics and the diverse strategies and behaviors employed by individuals when faced with conflict. Thus, this study
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built on the social role theory (Eagly and Wood, 2012) to examine the relationship between relative power and creativity in conflict, with a particular focus on the moderating role of gender.

Study 1 was a field study where participants who had experienced interpersonal conflicts in the workplace reported their level of creativity while dealing with a recalled conflict. Results showed that higher relative power of the conflicting member was associated with greater creativity, while this effect was stronger among women than men. These results provided full support for Hypotheses 1 and 2. Study 2 aimed to replicate and expand upon the findings of Study 1 by utilizing an experimental design to establish causal relationships. It also measured both dimensions of creativity (originality and effectiveness) using more objective tools (e.g., experts coded generated ideas for both creativity dimensions, originality, and effectiveness) and further manipulated contextual creativity (Shalley and Gilson, 2004). The results showed that power did not have a direct effect on creativity, but it interacted with gender and contextual creativity. More specifically, power had a positive effect on idea originality for women only when the context encouraged creativity. When predicting idea effectiveness, we found that men with more power were less likely to generate effective ideas compared to women. These findings are in line with our initial hypotheses and highlight the importance of considering gender and contextual creativity in understanding the relationship between power and creative idea generation in conflict situations.

Despite these findings, which were in line with our hypotheses, we also obtained unexpected results in Study 2, when predicting idea effectiveness in particular. More specifically, we found a negative effect of power on idea effectiveness among women in the high creativity condition and among men in the low creativity condition. This suggests that the conditions for generating effective ideas may differ for women and men, with women in power potentially undervaluing contextual creativity, while men potentially requiring explicit
support for creativity. Further research should explore the role of contextual creativity in understanding these dynamics.

Taken together, these findings provide evidence supporting a positive relationship between power and creativity, indicating that individuals with higher perceived power tend to exhibit greater levels of creativity when managing conflicts, while this effect is stronger among women. However, the nuances of this relationship become apparent when considering the distinct dimensions of creativity, namely originality and effectiveness, suggesting the need for further research to elucidate underlying mechanisms and contextual factors shaping these relationships. Given the divergent results between the two studies, we conducted a comparative analysis detailed in Appendix A to enhance clarity and provide a deeper understanding of our results.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

This study makes three significant contributions to the existing literature. First and foremost, it contributes to our understanding of creativity within the landscape of interpersonal conflict in the workplace—an area that, despite its substantial importance (see Runde and Flanagan, 2012), has remained relatively underexplored. This study ventures into the paradoxical challenge of fostering creativity amid conflict, where individuals contend with heightened cognitive load, narrowed focus, fear of judgment, and communication barriers (Lewicki et al., 2020). These elements often raise formidable obstacles to creative thinking, as evidenced by prior research (Chen, 2006; Lee et al., 2018; Yong et al., 2014). By delving into this complex terrain, the study seeks to unveil the factors that facilitate creative processes within the context of conflict. The study goes beyond the conventional understanding of conflict as a hindrance to creativity, seeking to uncover the role of contextual (e.g., power) but also individual (e.g., gender) characteristics in creativity in conflict situations. Therefore, this study aims to provide a more profound perspective on how creativity manifests during
workplace conflicts, paving the way for a more nuanced and applicable understanding of creative processes in challenging organizational contexts.

Second, this study significantly broadens the scope of existing knowledge on the relationship between power and conflict (Fousiani, 2020; Fousiani et al., 2021) and makes a substantial contribution to the literature on power and creativity (Galinsky et al., 2008). More specifically, this study provides valuable insights into how individuals employ creative thinking as a conflict resolution tool within the complex framework of power dynamics during conflicts. In doing so, this study enhances our understanding of the dynamic interplay between power and creativity, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of how individuals leverage their creative capacities in situations of conflict, ultimately shaping organizational outcomes.

Third, this study advances the social role theory (Eagly and Wood, 2012) by emphasizing the importance of recognizing the superior skills, particularly increased creativity, of women in conflict situations. By highlighting the unique strengths that women bring to the table in such challenging scenarios, this research contributes to a nuanced understanding of social roles, creativity, and conflict dynamics, ultimately enriching our understanding of these complex interpersonal interactions within the workplace.

Future research in this field can take several paths based on the contributions of this study. First, scholars may delve deeper into the contextual factors influencing creativity during workplace interpersonal conflicts, exploring specific contextual elements and individual differences. For instance, motivational climate at work (e.g., performance-oriented or mastery-oriented climate; Buch et al., 2015; Nerstad et al., 2018) may influence how creative employees behave when facing conflicts within their team. Similarly, various individual characteristics (i.e., chronological age; Fousiani et al., 2022) but also personality traits (Amabile, 1996) may influence how creatively employees in a powerful position may
approach workplace conflict (Curşeu et al., 2022; De Clercq et al., 2017; see also Lee et al., 2018). Second, the dynamics of power and creativity could be extended beyond conflict situations to various organizational contexts such as decision-making processes or team collaborations. Finally, further investigating the gendered aspects of creativity in conflict, considering societal expectations and biases (see Eagly and Wood, 2012), would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of gender dynamics in professional settings.

Besides its theoretical implications, this study has strong practical implications for organizations and workplaces. First, recognizing the potential for creativity in conflict situations can help organizations view conflicts as opportunities for growth and positive change. By fostering a supportive environment that encourages creative thinking and problem-solving during conflicts, organizations can harness the innovative potential of their employees and transform conflicts into constructive outcomes. Second, this study emphasizes the need to empower and promote women in high-power positions, especially in conflict-prone environments. Unfortunately, despite their value, creative ideas from women often face a higher likelihood of rejection rather than implementation within organizational settings (Foss et al., 2013), which happens because individuals from minority groups, including women, frequently encounter exclusion, ridicule, or a lack of attentive listening (Carter et al., 2003; Fairfax, 2011; Khatib et al., 2021). Overcoming this barrier necessitates assigning women to high-power roles within organizations. Given the superior skills and increased creativity demonstrated by women in conflict situations, organizations can benefit from leveraging their unique perspectives and abilities to effectively manage conflicts and generate creative solutions. Moreover, by promoting gender diversity and providing equal opportunities for women to hold positions of power (Taneja et al., 2012), organizations can enhance their capacity for creativity and innovation, leading to improved organizational performance and success.
Strengths, Limitations, and Future Directions

This study has several strengths that contribute to its robustness. First, the study utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining both a field study (Study 1) and an experimental design (Study 2), allowing for a comprehensive examination of the relationship between power, gender, and creativity in conflict. This methodological diversity enhances the validity and generalizability of the findings. Second, this study incorporated multiple measures of creativity, assessing both the dimensions of originality and effectiveness. Moreover, by employing objective coding by experts, the study ensured a more rigorous evaluation of the creative ideas, enhancing the reliability and validity of the results (Study 2). Finally, the study considered important contextual factors by manipulating contextual creativity in Study 2. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of how the situational context can interact with power and gender to influence creative thinking in conflict situations.

Despite its strengths, this study has several limitations as well, which offer directions for future research. First, the absence of a mediator in any of the studies restricts our understanding of the underlying mechanisms that explain the relationship between power, gender, and creativity in conflict. Including a mediator could have shed light on the specific processes through which power and gender influence creative thinking in conflict situations. Future research should explore potential explanatory mechanisms to gain a deeper understanding of these dynamics, such as investigating how individuals construe power as either responsibility or opportunity, offering valuable insights into these complex relationships (De Wit et al., 2017). Furthermore, examining other potential mediators, such as relational skills (Eagly and Carli, 2007; Ely, 1995; Post et al., 2019), emotion management skills (Lively and Heise, 2004), or cognitive processes (Abraham, 2016), could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how power and gender interact to influence creativity.
in conflict situations. Another limitation is the cross-sectional design of Study 1, which does not allow us to draw causal conclusions. Although Study 2 (experiment) partly addressed this limitation, adopting a longitudinal design could provide stronger evidence for causal relationships and better control for confounding variables.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the effects of power dynamics and gender on creativity in interpersonal conflicts in the workplace. The findings underscore the positive impact of power, particularly when assigned to women, in fostering constructive outcomes and growth during conflicts (e.g., more novel and original ideas). Consequently, there is a need to empower women in high-power positions. Recognizing the significance of power and gender dynamics may enable organizations to harness creativity for conflict management, leading to improved collaboration and organizational functioning.
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Conflict of Interest

Authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Compliance with Ethical Standards:

This research involves human participants. All procedures performed in this study were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Ethics approval was obtained from the university of the corresponding author prior to data collection.

Data Availability Statement: Data and Online Supplemental Materials are available from the Open Science Framework at:

https://osf.io/tveau/?view_only=e3b4dd62b6f340679bd0ace6edf177ac
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**Table 1**

*Regression Analyses Results on Idea Originality (Study 2).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-0.40; 10.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>-2.83</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>-1.62</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-6.28; .62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-3.15</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>-1.81</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-6.58; .29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>-3.00</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>-1.78</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-6.33; .33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power x Gender</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-0.15; 4.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power x Creativity</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>0.52; 4.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Creativity</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>0.65; 4.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power x Gender x Creativity</td>
<td>-1.85</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>-2.71</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>-3.19; -0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-0.002; 0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>-1.17</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-0.71; 0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving a Deal</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>-0.36</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>-0.77; 0.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Power and creativity were coded as: 1 = low, 2 = high. Gender was coded as: 1 = woman, 2 = man. Achieving a deal was coded as: 1 = no, we did not make a deal, 2 = yes, we did make a deal, chronological age was measured in years; Occupational status was coded as: 1 = student, 2 = employee, 3 = self-employed, 4 = unemployed, 5 = retired. Idea originality was coded as: 1 = not at all original, 5 = very original.
Table 2

Regression Analyses Results on Idea Effectiveness (Study 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>-3.22; 4.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.68; 4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.15; 4.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.19; 4.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power x Gender</td>
<td>-1.65</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>-2.10</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-3.21; -0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power x Creativity</td>
<td>-0.55</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>-2.01</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-3.08; -0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Creativity</td>
<td>-2.00</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>-2.59</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-3.53; -0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power x Gender x Creativity</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.28; 2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-0.002; 0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-1.95</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.03; 0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving a Deal</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>-0.37; 0.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Power and creativity were coded as: 1= low, 2= high. Gender was coded as: 1= woman, 2= man. Achieving a deal was coded as: 1= no, we did not make a deal, 2= yes, we did make a deal, chronological age was measured in years; Occupational status was coded as: 1= student, 2= employee, 3= self-employed, 4= unemployed, 5= retired. Idea effectiveness was coded as: 1= not at all effective, 5= very effective.
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**Figures**

**Figure 1**

*Effect of Relative Power on Creativity as a Function of Gender (Study 1).*

![Graph showing the effect of relative power on creativity as a function of gender.](image)

*Note.* Relative power was measured on a 7-point Liker scale: (1= *definitely the other person*, 7= *definitely myself*). Creativity was measured on a 7-point Liker scale 1= *not at all*, 7= *to a great extent*). Gender was coded as: 1= *women*, 2= *men*. 
Figure 2

Effect of Relative Power on Idea Originality as a Function of Gender in High and Low Creativity Conditions (Study 2).

Note. Both power and creativity were coded as 1 = low, 2 = high. Gender was coded as follows:
1 = women, 2 = men. Idea originality was coded as: 1 = not at all original, 5 = very original.
Figure 3

Effect of Relative Power on Idea Effectiveness as a Function of Gender in High and Low Creativity Conditions (Study 2).

Note. Both power and creativity were coded as 1 = low, 2 = high. Gender was coded as follows: 1 = women, 2 = men. Idea effectiveness was coded as: 1 = not at all effective, 5 = very effective.
### Appendix I

*Exploratory Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation on Relative Power and Creativity (Study 1)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1: Relative Power</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Who do you think had the strongest position?</td>
<td>.869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Who do you feel had most influence?</td>
<td>.826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Who do you feel had the most power?</td>
<td>.858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Who do you think had the best basis to negotiate?</td>
<td>.676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Who do you feel had the best negotiation position?</td>
<td>.763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Who do you feel was most in control of the situation?</td>
<td>.839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Who do you feel was the most powerful person?</td>
<td>.825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Who do you think was most dependent on the other?</td>
<td>-.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Who do you feel needed the other most?</td>
<td>-.472</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Factor 2: Creativity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I solved the problem at hand by thinking creatively (out-of-the-box).</td>
<td>.868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I felt free to think of new ideas on how to deal with the conflict/disagreement at hand.</td>
<td>.899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I was free to develop creative ideas on how to solve the issue at hand.</td>
<td>.903</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. I could “take risks” (come up with unusual ideas) when thinking of possible solutions to this disagreement/conflict. .822
5. I was free to think of creative solutions to the conflict/disagreement at hand. .843
6. I could come up with creative ideas on how to deal with this issue. .870
7. I was free to express unusual ideas on how to solve the conflict or disagreement at hand without the fear of being called stupid. .845
8. I felt recognized for coming up with creative ideas when trying to find a solution to the disagreement at hand. .837
9. I felt rewarded for thinking of creative ideas when trying to solve this conflict/disagreement. .833
10. I had a free flow of ideas. .766
Study 3. Appendix I. Factor Analysis (PCA with Varimax rotation) of negotiation behavior for power-unrelated topics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1: Distributive behavior</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Arguments referring to role instruction or context</td>
<td>.768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Threats and warnings</td>
<td>.452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Repeating an offer</td>
<td>.466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2: General</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Providing information (about points or interests)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Asking for or providing explanation (about behavior)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Commitment to a certain position</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Accepting an offer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Rejecting an offer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 3: Integrative behavior (Information exchange and offers)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Asking the other for an offer or a suggestion or a reaction to an offer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Inquiring about the other’s points or priorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Offering an exchange</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Proposing a common or specific offer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Factor 2 contains items that involve positional behavior, information exchange and offers. Given that this factor is mixed, we labelled it “general” and we did not include it in our analyses. Items “Offering an exchange” and “Proposing a common or specific offer” cross-loaded on the Integrative behavior factor. We retained these items in this factor.
Study 3. Appendix I. *Factor Analysis (PCA with Varimax rotation) of negotiation behavior for power-unrelated topics.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1: Positional behavior</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Providing information (about points or interests)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Asking for or providing explanation (about behavior)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Commitment to a certain position</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Accepting an offer</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Rejecting an offer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2: Information exchange and offers</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Asking the other for an offer or a suggestion or a reaction to an offer</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>8. Offering an exchange</td>
<td></td>
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<td>9. Proposing a common or specific offer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 3: Positional behavior</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Arguments referring to role instruction or context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Threats and warnings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Repeating an offer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The items “Providing information (about points or interests)” and “Asking for or providing explanation (about behavior)” of the information exchange dimension cross-loaded on the positional behavior factor. We deleted these two items from the factor.
Appendix II

Both Study 1 and Study 2 investigate the relationship between power and creativity in conflict management, albeit employing different research designs and methodologies. Study 1 adopts a field study approach, collecting data from 226 employees who recall workplace conflicts and rate their relative power and creativity levels. The study finds a positive relationship between power and creativity, while men exhibit higher creativity than women (main effect). Additionally, gender moderates the relationship between power and creativity, indicating that power has a stronger positive effect on creativity among women. Conversely, Study 2 utilizes an experimental design involving 154 dyads of participants engaged in real-time conflict simulations. Unlike Study 1, Study 2 assesses both idea originality and effectiveness, finding that power positively influences idea originality, particularly in contexts explicitly fostering creativity and among women, which is in line with the findings of Study 1. However, Study 2 reveals a negative effect of power on idea effectiveness, especially among women in high creativity contexts and men in low creativity contexts, deviating from the findings of Study 1. Taken together, these findings provide evidence supporting a positive relationship between power and creativity, indicating that individuals with higher perceived power tend to exhibit greater levels of creativity when managing conflicts, while this effect is stronger among women. However, the nuances of this relationship become apparent when considering the distinct dimensions of creativity, namely originality and effectiveness, suggesting the need for further research to elucidate underlying mechanisms and contextual factors shaping these relationships.
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Online Supplementary Material

Study 1

General information

Even in the best collaborations, it is possible that people get into conflicts with others or disagree with how things should be done... Think of a conflict (i.e., strong disagreement on an important issue) you have had (or you still have) with another person at your work over the last 6 months.

The conflict should preferably be work-related, and it should be between you and a colleague, your supervisor/manager, or a subordinate employee (i.e., someone who holds an inferior position than yours). The conflict/disagreement that you think of, must be a conflict that required some sort of negotiation between you and the other person (e.g., you had to discuss about it and come up with possible solutions). Please focus on this very conflict while filling in this questionnaire...

In the following page, we are requesting answers regarding the specifics of the conflict. The conflict, I will focus on while answering the questions to follow, involves me and a subordinate employee/colleague/my supervisor/other (please indicate).

Measures

Relative Power

(Van Kleef et al., 2006)

In this conflict (e.g., while discussing or arguing about this issue)...  

1) Who do you think had the strongest position?
2) Who do you feel had most influence?
3) Who do you feel had the most power?
4) Who do you think had the best basis to negotiate?
5) Who do you feel had the best negotiation position?
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6) Who do you feel was most in control of the situation?

7) Who do you feel was the most powerful person?

8) Who do you think was most dependent on the other?

9) Who do you feel needed the other most?

(1 = definitely the other person, 7 = definitely myself)

Creativity

Organizational Encouragement subscale of the KEYS scale (Amabile, 1995; Amabile et al., 1996)*

While discussing possible solutions to this disagreement/conflict:

1) I solved the problem at hand by thinking creatively (out-of-the-box).

2) I felt free to think of new ideas on how to deal with the conflict/disagreement at hand.

3) I was free to develop creative ideas on how to solve the issue at hand.

4) I could “take risks” (come up with unusual ideas) when thinking of possible solutions to this disagreement/conflict.

5) I was free to think of creative solutions to the conflict/disagreement at hand.

6) I could come up with creative ideas on how to deal with this issue.

7) I was free to express unusual ideas on how to solve the conflict or disagreement at hand without the fear of being called stupid.

8) I felt recognized for coming up with creative ideas when trying to find a solution to the disagreement at hand.

9) I felt rewarded for thinking of creative ideas when trying to solve this conflict/disagreement.

10) I had a free flow of ideas.

(1 = not at all great, 7 = to a great extent)
POWER, GENDER, AND CREATIVITY IN CONFLICT

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*Items from KEYS are reprinted, for research purposes only, with the permission of Teresa M. Amabile, Ph.D. We adjusted the original items of the Organizational Encouragement subscale to the specifics of this study after acquiring written permission.

Study 2

Instructions and topics

Imagine that you are working for a company and it’s time to plan your summer holiday absence!

Holiday policy: In your company, the holiday period is between 1st of July and 15th of September while the duration of employees' holidays ranges between 9 and 14 days (14 days in a row is the maximum one can get).

Your problem:

Topic 1: The problem is that both you and a colleague of yours would like to go on holiday exactly at the same period, namely during the 1st and 2nd week of July. This is a problem because your boss cannot approve your leave even if it slightly overlaps with the leave of another colleague.

Topic 2: Moreover, both you and your colleague wish to take a leave for 14 days at once. However, your boss cannot grant 14 days of holidays to both of you simultaneously as this would cause delays in several projects. You can only take 14 days of holidays if your colleague accepts to take fewer days off. Otherwise, you will have to take fewer days off.

In the following step, you are invited to negotiate with your colleague and see whether you can reach an agreement.
POWER, GENDER, AND CREATIVITY IN CONFLICT

You reach an agreement only if both of you agree a) on the exact period of your summer holidays and b) on the exact duration of your holidays.

Manipulations

High Power. Important to know before you start: In the unfortunate event that you do not reach an agreement with your colleague, your boss will have to decide for the both of you. Your boss is willing to prioritize your request over your colleague's on the basis that you have a large family and you cannot be very flexible regarding holidays. In that case, neither your colleague nor you will get a leave exactly when you want it and for your preferred duration.

Thus, even though your boss's decision will be to some extent adjusted to your preferences, which is a big advantage for you, you might be better off if you try to reach an agreement with your colleague.

Low Power. Important to know before you start: In the unfortunate event that you do not reach an agreement with your colleague, your boss will have to decide for the both of you. Your boss is willing to prioritize your colleague's request over yours on the basis that your colleague has a large family and is rather inflexible regarding holidays. In that case, neither your colleague nor you will get a leave exactly when you want it and for your preferred duration.

However, your boss's decision will be to some extent adjusted to your colleague's preferences. This is a big disadvantage for you. Therefore, you might be better off if you try to reach an agreement with your colleague.

High Creativity. We believe it is important for you to first brainstorm and think of many possible ideas before discussing the issues with your counterparts.
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The issue is: 'Both me and my colleague want to have holidays a) during the same period (1st and 2nd week of July), and b) for as long as possible (14 days in a row). This is not possible for both of us.' Please think of many possible ideas on how to resolve both topics of disagreement (time and duration of absence) and write your ideas down. For this: Try to come up with as many ideas, solutions, or suggestions as you can think of. This increases the chances that you think of creative ideas to solve both issues. Aim to think out-of-the-box: try to come up with new, wild or seemingly unfeasible ideas. Such original ideas are actually very helpful to solve conflicts! No idea is too strange or weird at this point, let all your ideas flow to come to new ideas. Do not criticize your own ideas. Try to combine your ideas and build on them to come to new ones. Keep in mind that what you write will not be sent to your colleague.

You have up to 6 minutes for this task. After 6 minutes, you are automatically referred to the next page. After 5 minutes, the 'next' button will appear and you can manually proceed to the next page, where you will chat with your colleague. During the chat, you’ll be able to see the ideas you’ve written down.

Low Creativity. Please try to come up with one possible solution concerning the disagreement with your colleague on both topics (time and duration of holidays) and write it down below.

After you are done with this task, we would like to ask you to do something different: Please, think of as many American food-chains as possible that exist in Europe and type the names of the food-chains in the same box with your proposed solution (the names of the food chains should follow your proposed solution). Keep in mind that what you write will not be sent to your colleague.
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You have up to 6 minutes for this. After 6 minutes, you are automatically referred to the next page. After 5 minutes, the 'next' button will appear and you can manually proceed to the next page, if you want to, you will chat with your colleague.

Payoff Schedule. In real life it is not always possible to implement our ideas or proposed solutions. Instead, we are often presented with fixed alternatives and we are invited to choose among them. Therefore, to simulate this real-life issue, we will now present you with certain options, that you can see in the payoff schedule below. Imagine that these are the alternatives that your boss proposes. You have to discuss with your colleague and agree on one single option per topic!

Instructions on how to use the payoff schedule: 1) Each option of the payoff slip corresponds to earned points. Your goal is to earn as many points as possible, while arriving at a consensus on both topics. 2) The points in your colleague's payoff schedule might differ from yours, however it is still possible to find options that fulfill both colleagues' wishes. Essentially, you will first discuss the options with your colleague and agree on one of them. After that, you are asked to enter the number from the payoff schedule that corresponds to the option that you and your colleague jointly selected.

After 3 minutes in the chat, you are automatically referred to the next page. Please take some time to read the payoff schedule very carefully so that you know how many points each alternative per topic might give you.
High Power payoff schedule and allocation of points.

### Issue 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exact Period of Time Off</th>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Exact Duration of Time Off</th>
<th>Alternative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) You take time off during the 1st &amp; 2nd week of July and your colleague takes off during the 1st &amp; 2nd week of September</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1) You take 14 days off and your colleague takes 9 days off</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) You take time off during the 2nd &amp; 3rd week of July and your colleague takes off during the 3rd &amp; 4th week of August</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>2) You take 13 days off and your colleague takes 10 days off</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) You take time off during the 3rd &amp; 4th week of July and your colleague takes off during the 2nd &amp; 3rd week of August</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>3) You take 12 days off and your colleague takes 11 days off</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) You take time off during the 2nd &amp; 3rd week of August and your colleague takes off during the 3rd &amp; 4th week of July</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>4) You take 11 days off and your colleague takes 12 days off</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) You take time off during the 3rd &amp; 4th week of August and your colleague takes off during the 2nd &amp; 3rd week of July</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5) You take 10 days off and your colleague takes 13 days off</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) You take time off during the 1st &amp; 2nd week of September and your colleague takes off during the 1st &amp; 2nd week of July</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6) You take 9 days off and your colleague takes 14 days off</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POWER, GENDER, AND CREATIVITY IN CONFLICT

Low Power payoff schedule and allocation of points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue 1</th>
<th>Issue 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exact period of time off</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exact duration of time off</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alternative</strong></td>
<td><strong>Alternative</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Your colleague takes time off during the 1st &amp; 2nd week of July and you take time off during the 1st &amp; 2nd week of September</td>
<td>1) Your colleague takes 14 days off and you take 9 days off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Your colleague takes time off during the 2nd &amp; 3rd week of July and you take off during the 3rd &amp; 4th week of August</td>
<td>2) Your colleague takes 13 days off and you take 10 days off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4) Your colleague takes 11 days off and you take 12 days off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Your colleague takes time off during the 3rd &amp; 4th week of August and you take off during the 2nd &amp; 3rd week of July</td>
<td>5) Your colleague takes 10 days off and you take 13 days off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Your colleague takes time off during the 1st &amp; 2nd week of September and you take off during the 1st &amp; 2nd week of July</td>
<td>6) Your colleague takes 9 days off and you take 14 days off</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternatives</th>
<th>Final Payoffs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POWER, GENDER, AND CREATIVITY IN CONFLICT

Manipulation Checks

Power

Based on my boss’s intentions about how to deal with the holiday issue

1) I was in an advantageous position compared to my colleague
2) I was in a better position than my colleague
3) My colleague was in a better position than me
4) My colleague was in a disadvantaged position compared to me

(1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree)

Creativity

During this conflict...

1) I was encouraged to think creatively.
2) I was encouraged to combine the solutions that I generated with the solutions that my colleague proposed to me.
3) I was encouraged to come up with even strange and unusual ideas while thinking of possible solutions.
4) I was encouraged to think “out of the box” while generating ideas for possible solutions.

(1 = not at all true, 7 = completely true)

Guidelines for raters:

Evaluate each idea on originality, that is, on how novel and unique the idea is, and assign to it one of the following originality scores:

1) not at all original – idea is identical to, or virtually the same as an idea that already exists, or that is frequently mentioned
POWER, GENDER, AND CREATIVITY IN CONFLICT

2) slightly original – idea is only a slight change to a common, existing idea (it's not fundamentally different, but has a somewhat new twist or angle)

3) moderately original – idea is a clear change to an existing idea (although the existing idea can be easily recognized) and adds some really original aspects to it (for example, takes a surprising perspective)

4) original – idea is somewhat similar to existing ideas, but in a completely new way or context

5) very original – idea is completely novel and unique, it has no discernible qualities of pre-existing ideas

Evaluate each idea on effectiveness, that is, on how well you think the idea will solve the problem.

When you ask yourself the question “Will it solve the problem / Will it work?”, it may be helpful to consider the effectiveness of an idea in terms of its potential “broadness”:

“Will it solve the entire problem, or only part(s) of the problem?” [broadness of domain(s)]

“Will it have only a short-term effect, or a long-term effect?” [broadness of time-frame]

An idea that will solve all aspects of a problem and with a long-lasting effect would be considered to be more effective than an idea that will only solve part of the problem or that will only have a short-term effect.

Based on these considerations, please assign each idea one of the following effectiveness scores:

1) not at all effective – idea does not solve the problem at all.

2) slightly effective – idea only solves the problem to a small extent.
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3) moderately effective – idea sufficiently solves the problem.

4) effective – idea solves the problem quite well.

5) very effective – idea is the ideal solution to the problem.